

# ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

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the WORLD ALLIANCE of YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS  
the WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
the WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION  
the WORLD COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



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## United Nations Religious Liberty Article Sustained

The (third) Committee of the Assembly of the United Nations has sustained the draft of Article 16 concerning freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

The text of the draft of the Commission of Human Rights which the third Committee of the Assembly had before it was as follows:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

The most important amendments proposed in the course of the discussions were the following. The first was submitted by the U.S.S.R. and reads: "Everyone must be guaranteed freedom of thought and freedom to perform religious services in accordance with the laws of the country concerned and the requirements of public morality". The Soviet definition advanced only a limited concept of religious freedom and sought to establish the principle that both the understanding and practice of religious freedom are subject to such laws as the state may be disposed to make.

The amendment proposed by Saudi Arabia called for the deletion of the entire second half of the Article, leaving only, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion". If adopted, this proposal would merely declare that man has the right to religious freedom without any sense indicating what that right involves.

Peru offered the following amendment: "Every person has the right freely to profess a religious faith, and to express it in thought and in practice, both in public as well as in private". This proposal would have limited the idea solely to religion and thus given no place to thought or conscience generally. It would have lacked the desirable objectivity for which the Churches have con-







tended. Moreover, in its reference to expression in thought, no outward manifestation is in reality declared; and, in limiting the clear outward expression to practice, the door was open to perpetuate the traditional connection between "practice" and "worship". It might therefore be inferred that the various manifestations mentioned in the draft text and the right to change one's religion or belief were by implication prohibited.

The Russian amendment was defeated by 23 votes to 9. The Saudi Arabia amendment (to delete the words "freedom to change his religion or belief") was defeated by 22 votes to 12. The entire article was finally sustained by 38 votes to 3 (Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia).

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs was represented in Paris by Professor F. Nolde. At the beginning of the Assembly he transmitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations the resolutions concerning human rights adopted by the Assembly of the World Council of Churches. In a letter sent to most delegates the Director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs urged that the draft of Article 16 as proposed by the Human Rights Commission should be sustained.

With regard to that part of article one which in the draft of the Commission reads: "They are endowed by nature with reason and conscience" the third Committee of the Assembly decided to delete the words "by nature". There was an extensive debate involving long speeches of a philosophical and theological character. One of the amendments was to insert the words "made in the image and likeness of the Creator" but most delegates considered that in view of the widely differing convictions held in this respect the use of such words would be meaningless and could not be forced upon those who were not ready to accept them.

E.P.S.Geneva

## PALESTINE

## World Council's Help to Refugees

Need for a "sense of urgency" in assisting the estimated 440,000 Arab and other refugees in the Holy Land has been underscored by the Rev. Elfan Rees, Director of the Refugee Division of the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid of the World Council of Churches.

At the same time, Mr. Rees announced that Dr Walter Klein, an American Episcopal clergyman, has agreed to act as co-ordinator of Christian action in the Middle East for the World Council. Dr Klein, who is on the staff of the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, will coordinate Christian action among the refugees in this area with the programme of the United Nations Mediator in Palestine.

Appointment of such a field representative in the Middle East was authorized in early September by the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council, which, at the same time, recommended an appeal for money, food, medical supplies and blankets. This appeal was later forwarded to member Churches of the World Council in late September by Dr W.A. Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary.

There are at least 272,000 refugees in Palestine, 50,000 in Lebanon, 80,000 in Syria, 20,000 in Transjordan and 12,000 in Egypt, mostly Arabs.



landed. Moreover, in the reference to expression in thought, no outward expression is in reality described; and in limiting the clear outward expression to action, the door was open to perpetuate the traditional connection between "practice" and "worship". It might therefore be inferred that the various religious mentioned in the draft text and the right to change one's religion or belief were by implication prohibited.

The Russian amendment was defeated by 23 votes to 9. The Saudi Arabian amendment (to delete the words "freedom to change his religion or belief") was defeated by 23 votes to 12. The entire article was finally submitted by 20 votes to 3 (Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia).

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs was represented in Paris by Professor V. Heide. At the beginning of the Assembly he presented to the Executive Council of the United Nations the resolutions concerning human rights adopted by the Assembly of the World Council of Churches. In a letter sent to most delegates the Director of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs wrote that the draft of Article 18 as proposed by the human rights Commission should be maintained.

With regard to that part of Article one which in the draft of the Commission reads: "Every man has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; that no man shall be compelled to adopt a religion, or to change his religion; and that no man shall be persecuted on account of his religion or race," there was an extensive debate involving long speeches by Heide, Heide, and Heide. One of the amendments was to delete the words "no man shall be persecuted on account of his religion or race" and to insert "no man shall be persecuted on account of his religion or race". The amendment was considered but in the end it was not adopted. The Commission held in this respect the use of such words would be meaningless and could not be forced upon those who were not ready to accept them.

#### World Council's Help to Refugees

#### PALESTINE

Need for a "scheme of rescue" in assisting the estimated 40,000 Arab and other refugees in the Holy Land has been emphasized by the new High Commissioner of the United Nations Division of the Department of Reconstruction and International Affairs of the World Council of Churches.

At the same time, Mrs. Heide announced that by Walter Heide, an American Episcopalian clergyman, has agreed to act as co-chairman of Christian action in the Middle East for the World Council. Mr. Heide, who is on the staff of the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, will coordinate Christian action among the churches in this area with the programme of the United Nations Division of the Department of Reconstruction and International Affairs.

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Substantial response from some Churches has been obtained through Church World Service, American interdenominational agency, and through Lutheran World Relief, as a result. The London Committee of the Refugee Division has allocated £2,000 to purchase supplies for Middle East refugees and the British Council of Churches has set up a special Middle East sub-committee. But additional help is urgently needed, Mr. Rees emphasised.

The desperateness of the refugees' plight was dramatised by this terse report received by the Refugee Division from a Holy Land refugee worker; "The figs have all been eaten". Since the refugees hitherto had been living off the figs, this means the problem of survival is becoming increasingly difficult for them, Mr. Rees said. He reported that many of the refugees have nowhere to sleep except outdoors on the bare ground, and that the approaching winter makes this situation desperate.

E.P.S. Geneva

#### SWITZERLAND

#### Second European Youth Planning Conference at Presinge

Following the decisions of the Provisional Committee taken at Lund, Swed (Sweden) in 1947, the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches gave its attention to the considerable needs of the reconstruction and development of Christian youth work in the European countries, devastated by war. A conference was held in October 1947 at Presinge, near Geneva, which provided both the Youth and Reconstruction Departments of the World Council of Churches with a basis on which to act. The amount of most urgent youth work needs in Europe was stated to total the sum of \$350,000.

This year a second European Youth Planning Conference was held on November 8-11, again at Presinge. In spite of the fact that the final results of last year's endeavours are not yet completely known, it became evident that they are rather satisfactory. More than \$150,000 were distributed in 1948 by the World Council of Churches channels (in addition help also went directly from several countries and agencies to the countries in need), to the Christian youth bodies in Germany, France, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Holland and Finland. Food for youth camps and leaders training conferences were provided, paper for printing of papers and youth literature was secured, and subsidy was granted to the salaries of some youth leaders. By this material help, the work which deals with the spiritual and moral needs of European youth, was strengthened.

The Presinge Conference was organised by the Youth Department and attended by 26 delegates of Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, and Denmark (representing the Scandinavian area) and by the representatives of the Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., World's Student Christian Federation. The delegates found warm words to express the gratitude to all the donors concerned, and stated the fact that the support received not only helped to increase considerably the effect of their work but led them to the decision "to create a chain of love in which they would pass on the manifestation of Christian love and solidarity". One of the delegates stated that whereas in her own country the lack of means is still felt in coping with the home youth work needs, the Christian bodies are increasingly interested in the difficulties of the others and keen to help them.





Owing to the fact that some countries were unable to send their delegates to Presinge, the information collected there covered again only partially the European field, but a complete list of the needs is being drawn up in order to start a new action in favour of youth work in Europe. E.P.S. Geneva

JAPANKagawa's Views on Japan's Situation

In his report on his tour in Japan, Mr. Sherwood Eddy, of the United States, writes of an interview he had with Dr Toyohiko Kagawa, who described the present situation of Japan as follows:

"Japan today is undergoing an unparalleled, a radical social and political revolution. The defeat has made us a new nation. When the Emperor acknowledged defeat on August 15, 1945, the mythology of Japan was shattered... Japan's defeat would have brought on a bloody revolution, were it not for the American occupation...

"Future Japan will owe much to General MacArthur, but the total revolution taking place is due to vast forces to which he has been able to give wise direction. The revolution is the resultant of war, the American occupation, and the Japanese character. I gladly welcome its ten principal achievements:

- 1) The denial by the Emperor of divinity and the firm establishment of the principle that sovereignty shall reside in the people. This is embodied in the new Constitution which begins: 'We the people... do ordain and establish'.
- 2) The legal recognition of labour unions.
- 3) The abolition of the centuries-old prostitution system.
- 4) The renunciation of the right of belligerency.
- 5) The emancipation of the peasant class by the establishment of the Farm Land Readjustment Law.
- 6) The firm establishment of freedom of thought.
- 7) The emancipation of women and granting them the franchise.
- 8) The Livelihood Security Law.
- 9) The checks and balances of a legislative, executive and judicial system of government.
- 10) The emergence of a Liberal-Social Democratic Cabinet. And, of course And, of course, the effort to undergird these reforms by a democratic system of education.

"Had it not been for the defeat of Japan, the above reforms would not have been realised in less than one or two centuries. The golden age of capitalism has gone. Defeat has compelled us to begin to socialise our economy. As a Christian socialist of course I rejoice in this. Although we are in the midst of an economic and political revolution, we have yet to see a spiritual revolution in needy Japan. If we do not have this, the glorious new Constitution will in time be reduced to a scrap of paper. The next few years will be a period of crisis for the whole future of Japan." E.P.S. Geneva

SOUTH AFRICAFirst Bishop of Swedish Lutheran Zulu Church

The Swedish Lutheran Zulu Church in South Africa has now, for the first time, its own Bishop who will reside in Dundee. Rev. Erik Sundgren, missionary







pastor in Mhene, was elected by the Board of the Swedish Church Foreign Mission as Bishop in South Rhodesia. Bishop Sundgreen was born in 1900 in Sweden and was ordained in 1924. Since 1927 he has been working in the Swedish Church Mission partly in its Zulu Church and partly in Rhodesia. E.P.S. Geneva

JAPANLatest Church News

Election of the Moderator:- The Rev. Michio Kozaki, on his return to Tokyo following the sessions of the Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam and the meeting of the International Missionary Council at Oegstgeest, Holland, was reelected Moderator of the Church of Christ in Japan at its Fourth General Assembly in October 1948.

The Apostles' Creed:- At this Assembly, attended by hundreds of delegates from all parts of the country, the Apostles' Creed was made the official creed of the United Church of Christ in Japan.

Number of Missionaries:- A count of the missionaries serving in Japan now under the auspices of the Foreign Missions Conference indicates that there are now actually in Japan more than 380 individuals. There are also several independent missionaries in addition to others serving under other Mission Boards. It is safe to say that the total Protestant staff stands in the neighbourhood of 400 to 450. Of this number, about 50 are short-term teachers, whose youth, devotion and specialised training will do much to invigorate the entire missionary enterprise in Japan. These are giving their services in the entire field of Christian schools without reference to denominational delineation. EPS Geneva

Amsterdam Study Volumes Published

The English edition of the study volumes used at the World Council of Churches Assembly at Amsterdam has just been brought out by the S.C.M. Press in London. These papers, prepared in the first place for those taking part in the Amsterdam Assembly, come under the general theme "Man's Disorder and God's Design". Four volumes were compiled (I. The Universal Church in God's Design. II. The Church's Witness to God's Design. III. The Church and the Disorder of Society. IV. The Church and the International Disorder), each intended to be worked on by one Section. Each of these books was the work of a small group of Christian thinkers from all parts of the world, while the number of those who contributed to the preliminary work by means of criticism and suggestions ran into hundreds. The volumes thus contain all the most valuable material to be gathered out of ecumenical discussions carried on over a period of two years, both in conferences and by correspondence.

To the volumes as they then stood have now been added the message of the Amsterdam Assembly and the report of the Section concerned. The official report of the Assembly will be published as Volume V of the series as a whole. The French edition will be published by Delachaux et Niestlé of Neuchâtel, and the German edition by the Furche-Verlag and Evangelisches Verlag for readers within Germany, and by the Gotthelf-Verlag in Zurich for readers outside Germany. Both editions are at present printing. E.P.S. Geneva







DENMARKMeeting of Danish and German Theologians

In order to overcome the difficulties of church work among the national minorities north and south of the German-Danish frontier, the World Council of Churches representative in Germany, Dean Høgsbro, recently invited thirty German and Danish churchmen, mostly from North and South Schleswig, to attend a five-day meeting in Snoghoj, near Fredericia. A joint declaration was issued following these discussions, in which it was stated:

"It was the aim of this meeting to talk over frankly, on the basis of our common confession, the difficulties involved in church work among national minorities north and south of the frontier, and to seek for ways and means of overcoming them. The conference was opened by Dean Høgsbro. The fellowship existing between those taking part was strengthened by Bible study together on the Epistle to the Philippians, and by daily prayers, morning and evening, in the chapel of the nearby Folk High School.

"The basic deliberations were assisted by talks on Luther's and Grundtvig's conceptions of the relation between Church and people, and by an exposition of the results of the Amsterdam Conference, with special reference to the question of church minorities.

"Further discussion clarified the canonical and practical possibilities involved for minorities on both sides of the frontier. There was general agreement that efforts should be made to achieve an arrangement by which church minorities should as far as possible come within the communion of the National Church or the Church of the country, as the case might be, though naturally the free development of their church life in relation to the mother-Church at home must be maintained. The Danish ruling on parish election was regarded as a profitable line to be followed in any further discussion of these problems."

E.P.S. Geneva

ROUMANIARestrictions on Inter-Church Contacts

A law recently promulgated in Roumania concerning the religious question contains a paragraph laying down what relations should be between confessional groups inside and outside Roumania. This paragraph states that relations between Roumanian groups and their brethren in other countries is to be of a purely religious nature. No group or representatives of a group may, without authorisation from the Roumanian Foreign Office, carry on relations with church groups, institutions or officials outside Roumania.

E.P.S. Geneva

CZECHOSLOVAKIAClergy and Political Life

On October 6, a new "law for the defence of the People's Republic" was promulgated in Czechoslovakia. Paragraph 28 of this law (No. 231) states: "Whosoever shall misuse his position, spiritual or otherwise, in order to influence political affairs in a manner unfavourable to the popular and democratic constitution of the Republic shall be punished for this offence by imprisonment with hard labour, lasting from one to twelve months, if no offence requiring a more severe penalty be involved."

E.P.S. Geneva







UNITED STATESQuakers' Gift to Russian Red Cross & Crescent

The American Friends Service Committee, after conferences with Russian officials in the United States, sent a gift of streptomycin valued at \$25,000 to Russia in July. A message on the drug packages, in Russian, stated that the gift was "a testimony of good will and friendship from the American Friends Service Committee to be used to promote the health of the people of the U.S.S.R."

The Committee received a cablegram from the Russian Red Cross expressing thanks for this gift and reporting that the drug was distributed among children in tuberculosis hospitals and sanatoriums of the U.S.S.R. E.P.S. Geneva

UNITED STATES100 Million Pounds of Relief for Germany

According to Religious News Service (October 28, 1948) Arthur J. Joice, executive secretary of CRALOG (Council of Relief Agencies Licensed for Operation in Germany) reported that more than 100,000,000 pounds of food, clothing and medicines, with an estimated value of about \$50,000,000 have been shipped to Germany since the sixteen member agencies of CRALOG started their voluntary relief programme in February 1946.

The supplies were contributed by church agencies, namely, Church World Service, War Relief Services of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Menno-nite Central Committee, American Friends Service Committee, and Lutheran World Relief. E.P.S. Geneva

SOUTH AFRICAChurches Protest Against Government's Racial Policy

A resolution denouncing the government's racial policy was adopted in Durban by the annual Assembly of the Congregational Union of South Africa. The Assembly decided to ask the Christian Council of South Africa to organise a deputation to see the Prime Minister Dr. Malan and convey the views of Congrega-tionalists and other like-minded Christians. The Assembly also recommended that the Christian Council prepare a statement setting forth the "Christian attitude" towards the racial issue.

The Assembly's resolution adopted unconditionally viewed with deep concern the government's proposal to abolish the existing representation of Negroes in Parliament and to remove coloured voters from the rolls.

"We are convinced", states the resolution, "that any policy of injustice and oppression must inevitably have disastrous repercussions on the whole commun-ity and that the government's proposals can only lead to increasing racial bitterness and ultimately to strife. The threat of such legislation is already driving large numbers of the coloured and African people into the arms of the Communists."

"It is our sincere conviction that the government's policy of segregation of races has no sanction in the New Testament and that, in fact, it is diametric-ally opposed to the teaching of Jesus Christ, and His concept of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man."





"We therefore urge the government to reconsider the whole question of race relationships in South Africa on a basis of good will and in the light of the principles of Jesus."

Meanwhile, opposition to the government's racial policy was spreading among some Dutch Reformed elements. The Wynberg (Cape) Ring, representing nine Cape Peninsula congregations of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, passed a similar resolution in which Christians under the jurisdiction of the Mission Church were urged to "pray that the government should be so led as to treat all coloured groups in our country in a Christian manner."

Several other representative bodies of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church have protested against segregation. E.P.S. Geneva

#### UNITED STATES

#### Opening of the Russian Orthodox

#### Academy

St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and Academy, housed in an annex of Union Theological Seminary in New York (see E.P.S. No. 4), was formally opened on November 5, 1948.

The Academy is the first Russian Orthodox establishment of its kind in the United States and will serve as a centre of training for priests of the Russian Orthodox Church in America and "other interested scholars".

The inaugural ceremonies were presided over by the Very Rev. Dr. George Florovsky, formerly of the Orthodox Theological Academy in Paris, and now a member of St. Vladimir's faculty. Messages of greetings were received from Metropolitan Theophilus of San Francisco, rector of the Academy, and a group of prominent Protestant clergymen and educators.

In his message, Dr Van Dusen, President of Union Theological Seminary, welcomed the opening of St. Vladimir's as "an event of importance for the Christian world far beyond the walls of this room".

"In a day when concern for wider Christian understanding and comity flows with greater power than at any time in the previous nineteen centuries", Dr Van Dusen said, "it is of the highest importance that every possibility of closer association and fuller understanding between these two mighty traditions - Orthodoxy and Protestantism - should be exploited to the full. We need to know one another better".

Endorsing Dr Van Dusen's message, Dr Florovsky said that "all reaches of the Orthodox tradition can be discussed and consummated only in a standing intercourse with the whole of the Christian world. The East must face the challenge of the West, and the West, perhaps, has to pay more attention to the legacy of the East, which, after all, was always meant to be an ecumenical and catholic message". E.P.S. Geneva

Theological Students in Germany:- Owing to the monetary reform the situation of theological students has become very difficult. The Evangelical Pastors' Associations in Germany decided this year to send an appeal to the pastors in the Western Zones, urging them to give up 1% of their basic salary every month as a special sacrifice, in view of the widespread distress. E.P.S. Geneva



